Amendment to Prevention of Corruption Act

*454. SHRI CHITTA BASU: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to amend the Prevention of Corruption Act in such a manner as to enable Government to confiscate ill-gotten wealth from even third parties benami holders; and

(b) if so, what steps have so far been third arties benami holders; and

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) The Criminal Law Amendment Ordinance, 1944 contains provisions for attachment of property procured through ill-gotten means as also for attachment of property of malafide transferees. Thus the necessary powers are already available. However, the question of introducing a comprehensive Prevention of Corruption Bill to make the provisions on the existing anti-corruption laws more effective is under consideration.

Indo-US agreement for modernisation of Telecommunications in India

*455. SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR SAHU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any accord has recently been signed between Indian and the US for American participation in India's telecommunications expansion and modernisaton; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Journalists arrested and charged by Government after operation "Blue Star"

*456. SHRI K. GOPALAN:
SHRI V. GOPALSAMY:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of journalists arrested and charged by Government in connection with Punjab problem since peration Blue Star;

(b) the name of the journalist involved and details of the action taken thereof;

(c) the names of the newspaper/weeklies|magazines against whom action has been initiated by the Government; and

(d) details of each case and whether any appeal|request was received to drop the action, if so, details thereof and action taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI BUTA SINGH): (a) to (d). The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Park demand for F-16's ad AWACS from US

*457. SHRI VIRENDRA VERMA:
SHRI J. P. GOYAL:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of Pakistan's latest demand to the US for the supply of another five squadrons of F-16 fighter planes, in addition to the early warning radar planes, which would give tremendous boost to Pakistan's air force striking power;

(b) if so, whether Government have made any critical analysis of Pakistan's piling up of highly sophisticated arms and ammunition, besides building up air striking power, thus posing serious threat to the security of the country and causing military imbalance in the sub-continent;

(c) what is India's percentage of defence expenditure of its GNP as compared

with the defence expenditure in Pakistan, China and other neighbouring countries and how does it relate to the country's needs, keeping in view the developments in the neighbouring countries; and

(d) in what manner Government propose to maintain balance of military power to meet any eventuality?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI ARUN SINGH): (a) Government have seen media reports in this regard.

(b) and (d) Government keep a constant watch on acquisition of major defence equipment by neighbouring countries, which has a bearing on our security, with a view to take appropriate measures for full defence preparedness. It will not be in the public interest to disclose details of the various steps taken by Government in this regard.

(c) According to the information contained in the Military Balance published by the International Institute of Strategic Studies, London, the defence expenditure as a percentage of the GNP of the following neighbouring countries, during 1983, was as under:—

Pakistan	—	6.9 per cent
Bangladesh	—	2 per cent
Indonesia	—	3.5 per cent
Nepal	—	1.40 per cent

Relating figures for China are, however, not available. The relevant figures for India are 3.4 per cent for 1983 & 3.8 per cent for 1985-86. The level of defence expenditure in India reflects a reasonable balance between our defence and development needs.

Doordarshan programmes on religious/ ideological issues

*458. SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) what was the total time the Doordarshan had devoted to religious programmes on the National Network during 1985 and 1986 till date; and

(b) whether Government have any policy or increasing the number of programmes on issues pertaining to secularism and socialism, if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI AJIT PANJA): (a) A total duration of 15 hours 48 minutes in 1985, and 9 hours 27 minutes upto end of November, 1986 have been devoted to programmes on religious festivals telecast on the National network including Delhi and relay transmitters.

(b) In keeping with the principles of socialism and secularism enshrined in the Constitution, Doordarshan is already telecasting adequate number of programmes on these subjects. Similarly all the important festivals of the various denominations and also programmes designed to benefit all sections of society, especially weaker sections are telecast.

International convention of civil and political rights

*459. SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR:
SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has ratified the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights and how they envisage 'freedom of information'; and

(b) if so, what steps Government are taking to grant such freedom of information to Indian citizens?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI BUTA SINGH): (a) and (b) India has acceded to the International Convention Civil and Political Right with certain reservations necessitated by our Constitutional and legal systems.